

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Brian Collins, Deputy Leader

DECISION NUMBER:

26/00036

Executive Decision – key**26/00036 – Turner Contemporary Works**

Decision:

As Deputy Leader, I agree to:

1. APPROVE the allocation of £1,055,196 to enable the necessary repairs, maintenance and improvement of the Turner Contemporary Gallery; and
 2. DELEGATE authority to the Director of Infrastructure to take relevant actions, including but not limited to, negotiating, finalising and entering into required contracts and other legal agreements as necessary to implement the decision.
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Reasons for decision:

Kent County Council (KCC) is a strategic partner with Turner Contemporary Trust, who run and manage the Turner Contemporary Gallery. KCC maintain liabilities relating to the maintenance and upkeep of the gallery. Under the terms of the lease KCC retain responsibility for elements of the building, including external fabric and key elements of infrastructure.

It is important to maintain the gallery as a key asset to the county, it delivers significant value to KCC by acting as a catalyst for regeneration in the area of Margate, boosting tourism and local economic growth, while helping to reduce deprivation in coastal communities.

A Key Decision is required because the total value of the proposed project (including contingency) could exceed £1m, which includes entering into the necessary contracts to deliver the works.

It supports KCC's priorities by creating jobs, attracting investment, enhancing education and skills through cultural programmes, and improving community wellbeing. At the same time, it strengthens Kent's reputation as a cultural destination, helping secure further funding and supporting long-term, sustainable place-making.

How the proposed decision supports the Council's Strategic Statement:

The decision supports building better communities as set out in the strategic statement Reforming Kent by:

Reducing inequalities: Investment in maintaining the gallery whilst supporting the continued regeneration of Margate, a coastal area with higher deprivation, helping to improve economic prospects and community resilience.

Economic growth: Ensures the building remains fit for purpose protecting a major cultural asset that attracts visitors, sustains the local tourism economy, and supports businesses across East Kent.

Health and wellbeing: Keeping the gallery operational enables ongoing access to arts and cultural activities, which contribute to mental wellbeing, social inclusion, and stronger communities.

Education and skills: Maintenance safeguards a venue that delivers education programmes and creative learning opportunities aligned with KCC's skills and aspiration objectives.

Sustainable infrastructure and place-making: As KCC retains responsibilities for elements of the building, maintaining it ensures a high-quality, safe, and sustainable public asset that underpins long-term regeneration.

Financial implications:

An Arts Council England Grant application was made in November 2025 seeking funding for essential maintenance works to the Gallery.

The application was successful and a grant of £865,000 has been allocated for the works to the gallery.

As part of the grant qualification requirements, KCC will need to contribute £50,000 to the project. The current scope has been produced based on investigations and condition survey information. It is anticipated that when further investigations are undertaken and construction works commences, further items currently outside of scope, may be revealed and therefore a contingency will also be required. Therefore, a total allocation of £1,055,196 is required to enable the necessary repairs, maintenance and improvement of the Turner Contemporary Gallery.

KCC's contribution has been allocated within the Modernisation of Assets (MOA) budget.

The total project funding will be specifically allocated to produce and meet the scope which includes essential maintenance and capital works to safeguard the building as a KCC asset and ensure it remains safe, accessible and operational.

Legal implications:

The grant of £865,000 has been formally accepted and is currently progressing through the legal processes required to finalise the agreement

As part of the grant qualification requirements, KCC will need to contribute to the project.

Legal support will be procured and appointed in consultation with KCC Legal Services.

Equalities implications:

An Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been undertaken and identified no direct equalities implications arising from this decision.

Data Protection implications:

A Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) screener has been performed and has confirmed that there are no DPIA implications and that a further DPIA assessment is not required in respect of this decision.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

The proposed decision was considered by the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee on 2 July 2026, where the proposed decision was ENDORSED.

The views of the Local Member have been sought and will be reported to the Cabinet Committee and the Cabinet Member taking the decision. To date no views or comments have been received.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

Option 1: Do nothing – not to undertake the works. If no action is taken then the maintenance obligations will increase over time leading to increased maintenance liability, higher reactive costs, possible operational disruption and loss of Arts Council England grant benefit – ***dismissed***.

Option 2: Enter into the necessary contracts to complete the essential works - Enter into the contracts for essential maintenance and improvements to the gallery. This allows a proactive approach to KCC maintenance obligations and allow the project to proceed **while accommodating** the Gallery's operational requirements – ***recommended option***.

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:

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Signed

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Date